



FARMERS FOR CLIMATE SOLUTIONS

Equity Framework

Prepared by the Equity Project Team

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*“Racial injustice [...] is so conspicuous in
Canada as to be undeniable.”¹*

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¹ Honourable Judge Del W. Atwood, paragraph 86 in
R v AL, 2018 NSPC 61 (CanLII), < <https://canlii.ca/t/hznlp> >, retrieved on 2021-08-26

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Introduction

Young farmers, women farmers, farmers with disabilities, Black farmers, Indigenous farmers and food providers, farmers of colour, small-scale farmers, 2SLGBTQ+ farmers, and new Canadian farmers often experience additional and unique barriers to enter and succeed in our sector. Farmers for Climate Solutions' (FCS) mission is to advance supportive conditions for farmers to adopt climate-friendly practices, including policy proposals. FCS is committed to ensuring that all of our climate policy proposals acknowledge and serve the diversity within our sector.

The vision of this Equity Project is to foster greater inclusion of a diversity of people in agriculture. But simply increasing the diversity of the sector, without addressing the systemic barriers equity-deserving farmers face is not good enough. In order to have more active, contributing and included farmers from diverse cultural groups, ages, abilities, sexual orientation and gender identity, we need to consider how equity is being distributed, procured and recognized.² Programs also need to be adaptable to best serve the kind of agriculture practiced by equity-deserving farmers.

The intent of this project is to achieve an increase in equity-deserving farmers in the farming population. The Greenlining³ Institute defines racial equity as “the condition that would be achieved if one’s race or ethnic origin was no longer a determining factor in one’s success. This concept focuses on achieving comparable favorable outcomes across racial and ethnic

² See Linus Karlsson et al, “Triple wins or triple faults? Analysing the equity implications of policy discourses on climate-smart agriculture”, 2018 (<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03066150.2017.1351433?journalCode=fjps20>)

³ The name of the institute references the practice by the banking and insurance sectors of “redlining”, drawing lines on maps that delineate neighbourhoods with higher populations of racialized and impoverished individuals. If an applicant resided in a redlined neighbourhood, they were routinely denied access to financing and insurance. See “The Suburban Origins of Redlining: A Canadian Case Study, 1935-54” by Richard Harris and Doris Forrester, Journal of Urban Studies, Vol. 40, No. 13, Dec 2003. (<https://www.jstor.org/stable/43100660>)

groups through the allocation of resources in ways designed to remedy disadvantages some people face through no fault of their own.”⁴ This applies to other equity-deserving groups as well.

The Greenlining Institute also addresses the fact that many face multiple disadvantages simultaneously. They define “Intersectionality: a particular way of understanding social location in terms of crisscrossing systems of oppression. Specifically, intersectionality is an analysis claiming that systems of race, social class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, nation, and age form mutually constructing features of social organization.”⁵

Climate change shines a bright light on environmental racism. In addition to mitigation and adaptation strategies in agriculture to cope with the impacts of climate change, true diversity, equity and inclusion calls for not just enabling equity-deserving farmers to thrive, but to also transform structures, knowledge systems, and practices to better serve equity-deserving farmers. This will be best achieved by working “from a foundation that accounts for the historical contexts in which current food system inequities manifest.”⁶

“Indigenous People in Canada (and globally) have been vulnerabilized; meaning that vulnerability does not exist outside of historical and social realities and that people are not inherently vulnerable, but are made so by the institutions and systems of capitalism, settler-colonialism, and White supremacy.”⁷ These same institutions and systems have vulnerabilized other equity-deserving groups and farmers.

The Equity Project learned directly from equity-deserving farmers in order to develop a framework and recommendations that could enhance current climate policy to better include and support equity-deserving farmers. This document seeks to name and address exclusionary systems and practices as they exist within the purview of Farmers for Climate Solutions and the scope of its work.

A note on language

In his 2019 inauguration address⁸ as Vice-President and Principal of the University of Toronto’s Scarborough campus, Dr Wisdom Tettey made the following challenge, which this paper seeks to embrace:

⁴ Racial Equity Toolkit by Adrian Sanchez and Carla Saporta, page 4, nd

⁵ *ibid.*

⁶ King, H. (2015). Three strategies to foster diversity in the food movement. *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*, 5(4), 185.

⁷ Levkoe CZ, McLaughlin J and Strutt C (2021) Mobilizing Networks and Relationships Through Indigenous Food Sovereignty: The Indigenous Food Circle’s Response to the COVID- 19 Pandemic in Northwestern Ontario. *Frontiers in Communication*. page 3. doi: 10.3389/fcomm.2021.672458

⁸<https://utsc.utoronto.ca/news-events/inspiring-inclusive-excellence-professor-wisdom-tetteys-installation-address>

I challenge all of us to start by thinking of, and relating to, those who are marginalized or are constrained by existing structures and practices as “equity-deserving groups,” and not “equity-seeking groups” — a concept which, while well-intentioned, perpetuates a perception of these groups as interlopers.

Those on the margins of our community, who feel or are made to feel that they do not belong, deserve equity as a right. They should not be given the burden of seeking it and they should not be made to feel that they get it as a privilege from the generosity of those who have the power to give it, and hence the power to take it back.

Additionally, readers can consult [Appendix A: Terminology](#), to find a list of terms used here, and how these are understood for the purpose of this paper.

Methodology

The framework and recommendations that follow are based on a literature review and research into other organizations and jurisdictions with diversity policies or programs, five sector-specific focus groups, a national survey, and the input from an Advisory Committee that brought together members from different equity-deserving groups (see [Appendix B: Equity Project Team and Participants](#) for more information).

We reached out to equity-deserving farmers through the FCS membership and networks for both focus group participants and survey respondents. The majority of those who participated in the project are active in the vegetable sector, but we also heard from nursery, flower, grain, and livestock farmers. Most of those who participated describe their practices as regenerative or ecological.

In addition to hearing directly from farmers and growers, we undertook a literature review and scan for model initiatives and frameworks. Through the research, it became abundantly clear that there is very limited support for, or even data on, equity-deserving farmers in Canada.

What we learned

Social and cultural phenomena affect equity-deserving farmers. Few saw themselves represented in agricultural media, including those from government agencies. Cultural stigma against farming can also be a challenge for some. The decision to farm can be difficult for first generation immigrants whose parents fought hard to come to Canada so their children could escape labour-intensive careers.

For Indigenous people considering farming, the practice of tending to the land can have negative associations with forced labour at Residential Schools. Safety was raised as an issue by lesbian farmers. A queer farmer in the focus group indicated that as soon as they had established a new farm, they received three requests from other queer women wanting to apprentice with them, since they felt it would be a safer work space.

Social networks are important for any farmer but are vital for those who are marginalized relative to their farming peers. For this very reason, it is common for equity-deserving farmers to establish themselves in proximity to urban centres where there are larger populations who share their cultural background. This can provide them with social and financial support and also create a ready market for their products, particularly if they are growing vegetables commonly used in their cuisines but not readily available in mainstream food venues.

The majority of the survey respondents connected with other farmers like themselves only on social media or virtual platforms. Labels can be a mixed blessing: farmers of colour have a range of coping mechanisms from "Since I cannot avoid being different, I might as well milk it!" to "Don't give me any special treatment, I am just as competent as the others." There can be a backlash against those who are perceived to receive special treatment.

How programs are delivered is as important as what they are. Trusted and respectful individuals who provide information on program offerings that are accessible through appropriate channels, language, and scheduling will best serve equity-deserving farmers. This can be fellow farmers and mentors as well as civil servants with an equity mandate. The US Department of Agriculture appointed its first ever Senior Equity Advisor in 2021 as a step towards accelerating "a transformation of our food system...embracing a call for racial justice and equity across food, agriculture and rural America"⁹.

In addition to the social exclusion described by participants in the Equity Project, the most common barriers identified by the farmers who engaged with the project include access to **information, financing, and land**. While these are common to any start-up farmer, they are often more acute for equity-deserving farmers.

⁹<https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2021/03/01/usda-announces-dr-dewayne-goldmon-senior-advisor-racial-equity-and>

Rural communities, where most farms are located, are often tight-knit and can pose barriers to anyone new to the area. Local knowledge is vital for understanding the local climate and soil conditions, where to buy good feed, seed, and equipment, who is available for contract work or labour. This **information** can be hard to come by when you are not just the new person in town, but visibly different. Moreover, “[s]ocial relations of power and privilege affect participation and decision making. They not only determine who is allowed to be part of the conversation but also shape who has the authority to speak and whose discursive contributions are considered worthwhile.”¹⁰

Financing for farming tends to privilege the very large farms, with \$750,000 common at the lower end of available loans. Most of the equity-deserving farmers who engaged with the Equity Project are on smaller parcels of land but for whom funding can nevertheless be critical. Financial equity and cash flow can be a real challenge for equity-deserving farmers. Many rely on loans from family, their own savings, a supportive partner, and off-farm work¹¹. Some expressed frustration with the constraints that come with funding through programs like the Environmental Farm Plan, wishing for greater control over investment decisions. Another participant, who had the financial security to assume a mortgage, was unable to obtain a mortgage for vacant land, which would have provided them land security. Land security is essential for long term planning that is the foundation of sustainable farming and viable businesses.

Participants of the Equity Project demonstrated diverse and creative approaches to accessing **land**. The Toronto area is notable for having a number of programs that support BIPOC farmers and food growers through mentoring, markets and land access offerings. In the rural landscape, access to land is facilitated through programs like [FarmLink](#) or the [Young Agrarians Land Matching](#) programs. Some access land through multi-generational land ownership arrangements. Many have tenuous access to the land they grow on, farming on land owned by someone else with varying degrees of security of access. This land insecurity impacts what investments they make, perennial planting decisions, and prioritizing infrastructure that can be dismantled and moved, as necessary.

Just like so many others who farm, equity-deserving farmers bring passion, tenacity and independence. Many also bring creative practices, crops and new market platforms and channels. As one participant stated succinctly, "we don't need saviours: just give us the same opportunities." For better or worse, 150 years ago, immigrant farmers established Canadian agriculture on stolen land¹² and frequently through stolen labour. In the 21st century, recent

¹⁰ Patricia Allen, Realizing justice in local food systems, 2010, p.303, Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society 2010, 3 doi:10.1093/cjres/rsq015

¹¹ Off-farm income accounted for 62.9% of the total income of farm families in 2018, up from 59.6% in 2017 - <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/210128/dq210128c-eng.htm>

¹² There is ample evidence that even when historical treaties existed, the removal of Indigenous people from their former territories did not occur under conditions that would, today, conform to the notions of free, prior, and informed consent.

immigrants and other equity-deserving farmers hold the potential to bring vital innovations along with new crops and management practices that can better adapt to our changing climate and growing conditions.

Origins and structures that perpetuate the lack of farmer diversity

As Noah McDonald wrote in 2018, “it is vitally important that advocates and policymakers alike understand, speak to, and reflect upon the massive extent to which our current food and agriculture system is built upon the exploitation of communities of color throughout history and into the present day.”¹³ Written as a blog for the American National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, the statement applies equally well to the Canadian food system.

Agriculture across Canada occurs on land once stewarded by Indigenous Peoples who pre-existed the creation of this country. Much of the land is covered by treaties, with obligations poorly met by the Canadian state and citizens. The remainder of what is Canada is land that has never been ceded, though actions of governments and fee simple owners¹⁴ do not acknowledge that fact.

In his 1974 book entitled *The Fourth World*, Secwepemc Elder George Manuel describes the bond that he experienced in his encounters with Indigenous people around the world: a common attachment to the land.

This is not land that can be speculated, bought, sold, mortgaged, claimed by one state, surrendered or counter-claimed by another. Those are things that men do only on the land claimed by a king who rules by the grace of God, and through whose grace and favour men must make their fortunes on this earth.

The land from which our culture springs is like the water and the air, one and indivisible. The land is our Mother Earth...all our structures and values have developed out of a spiritual relationship with the land in which we have lived.” (page 6-7).

¹³ <https://sustainableagriculture.net/blog/racial-equity-farm-bill-series3/>

¹⁴ Meaning owning the property and all rights to its use, including developing the land and buildings on the property subject to local ordinances.

Forty six years later, Leanne Betasamosake Simpson elaborates¹⁵ on the profound clash of cultural approaches to land in Canada:

The Canadian state has always been primarily interested in acquiring the “legal” rights to our land for settlement and for extraction of natural resources. The removal and erasure of Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg bodies from land make it easier for the state to acquire and maintain sovereignty over land because this not only removes physical resistance to dispossession, it also erases the political orders and relationships housed within Indigenous bodies that attach our bodies to our land...within Nishnaabeg thought, the opposite of dispossession is not possession, it is deep, reciprocal, consensual *attachment*. Indigenous bodies don’t relate to the land by possessing or owning it or having control over it. We relate to land through connection - generative, affirmative, complex, overlapping, and nonlinear *relationship*

Sarah Rotz further broadens the racial analysis: “Racial domination is reproduced differently based on relations of inequality over time. For instance, the logic of labour exploitation of African American slaves is profoundly different from the Indigenous context in Canada wherein logics of assimilation and extermination were coded through institutional structures, like the Indian Act ... Without such distinctions, their reproduction often gets lumped into general analyses of racism —thus continually neglecting how these logics (of elimination on one hand, and exploitation on the other) shape the variegated racial formations we see today.”¹⁶

African Canadians share that history of labour exploitation and ongoing repercussions which, like the experience of Indigenous Peoples, manifests in disproportionately high levels of poverty, incarceration, poor health status, and assaults. These are the result of structural racism, not of faults in the individual. As Ibram X. Kendi has noted, North Americans “have long been trained to see the deficiencies of people rather than policy. It’s a pretty easy mistake to make: People are in our faces. Policies are distant. **We are particularly poor at seeing the policies lurking behind the struggles of people.**”¹⁷ (emphasis added)

¹⁵ Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom Through Radical Resistance*, (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2017): p 42

¹⁶ “They took our beads, it was a fair trade, get over it”: Settler colonial logics, racial hierarchies and material dominance in Canadian agriculture, Sarah Rotz, *Geoforum*, 2017, page 159, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2017.04.010>

¹⁷ Ibram X. Kendi, *How to Be an Antiracist* (New York: One World, 2019): p. 28

In 1971, Canada was the first country in the world to adopt a multicultural policy which included the objective “to assist cultural groups to retain and foster their identity [and]... to overcome barriers to their full participation in Canadian society.”¹⁸ This was succeeded by the Canadian Multiculturalism Act in 1988. This Act states that the Minister may “encourage and assist the business community, labour organizations, voluntary and other private organizations, as well as public institutions, in ensuring the full participation in Canadian society, including the social and economic aspects, of individuals of all origins and their communities, and in promoting respect and appreciation for the multicultural reality of Canada”. (Section 5 (1) (d))

Despite the policies and laws that advocate inclusion, a quick scan of the leadership of agricultural organizations across the country or attendees at agricultural conferences makes it clear that agriculture is still dominated by heterosexual white men.

It is not possible to determine the exact number of equity-deserving farmers that exist in Canada. Unlike in the United States of America, where data can document the dramatic decline in Black farmers from nearly a million in 1920 to 45,000 today,¹⁹ Canada does not track demographic information on farmers, other than age and a binary gender option, even in the most recent 2021 Census of Agriculture.

“If multiculturalism is viewed and accepted only as the tolerated presence of different cultures in a society, without the simultaneous promotion of inclusion through programs to reduce barriers to equitable participation, then a form of segregation is the correct name for such policies and practices.”²⁰ The focus groups held by Farmers for Climate Solutions made it clear that many equity-deserving farmers in Canada do indeed experience segregation. One farmer participant went so far as to establish a redundant Farmers Institute in order to better serve the increasing diversity of farmers of their region, based on the lack of welcome extended by the established membership of the existing farmers institute.

Isolation was a common theme that was heard across all four focus group sessions. Yet, as the Canadian Agriculture Human Resources Council has documented, “successful individuals in agriculture seek advice and guidance broadly, not just from a few individuals. This appears to be an industry where consultation, information sharing, and connecting with others is a pathway to success.”²¹ Farmers for Climate Solutions will draw on this Equity Framework to advocate for genuine inclusion and an expansion of opportunities for equity-deserving farmers in the work to advance practical climate solutions.

¹⁸ https://lop.parl.ca/sites/PublicWebsite/default/en_CA/ResearchPublications/200920E#a2-2-2

¹⁹ <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/apr/29/why-have-americas-black-farmers-disappeared>

²⁰ Accommodating Cultural Diversity and Achieving Equity: An Introduction to Psychological Dimensions of Multiculturalism, by John W. Berry and David L. Sam. October 10, 2013, pg 153
<https://doi.org/10.1027/1016-9040/a000167>

²¹ Success in Agriculture: A gendered perspective of social networks. Marie-Hélène Budworth and Sara Mann, CAHRC, no date

Resistance to change

Pushback against equity initiatives is longstanding and, in the past few years, has become acute in North America. [Black Lives Matter](#) has experienced the targeted backlash of 'all lives matter,' while [Idle No More](#) has received similar hostility. In early 2021, the Biden Administration established a \$4 billion American Rescue Plan to respond to “decades of well-documented discrimination...and deliver debt relief to socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.”²² The program has been halted due to injunctions approved by federal judges on the basis of lawsuits brought forward by white farmers and ranchers that the program discriminates on the basis of race.²³

The Equity Project focused on farmers. Farm workers and many food system labourers are racialized individuals. As Sarah Rotz proposes, “while racialized immigrants are commonly coded as threatening, their exploitability has generated a concurrent discourse of ‘the hard worker’—so long as they remain relegated to political- economic spaces of exploitability. Regarding temporary migrant workers, the structure of the Canadian temporary foreign worker program has eliminated any opportunities for racialized farm workers to access land... Conditions of unfree labour (e.g. extensive employer power, no safe employee grievance procedures, worker deportability, dangerous working conditions, and worker dependence on a single employer) command efficiency and reliability from the workforce. That said, farmers consistently attribute worker behaviour to cultural and racial characteristics. In doing so, farmers ‘engage in a convenient form of social amnesia involving the erasure of their coercive power over workers and the consequences of that power for workforce compliance.’”

Climate change will continue to exacerbate the conditions that drive people to leave their homelands and families to seek employment in other countries. Adaptation to climate change may well need to incorporate considerations of farm labourers, not just from motives of justice but to embrace the considerable farming expertise that resides in this population.

Applying what we learned

The structures that perpetuate exclusion and harm are systemic, meaning that they are found throughout our cultures, institutions and policies. They exist, therefore, both within and external to our respective organizations. FCS is applying the findings of this Equity Project to its internal practice as well as integrating it into our climate policy formulation.

The FCS Equity Framework below elaborates the ways in which FCS and other agricultural organizations can integrate measures to advance equity internally. Following the Equity Framework is a set of recommendations that speak to how agricultural programs are

²² <https://www.farmers.gov/loans/american-rescue-plan/litigation-update>

²³ <https://www.politico.com/news/2021/08/03/biden-equity-agriculture-502209>

delivered, including those that pertain to specific practices that will help in the shift to more climate-friendly farming practices.

Equity Framework

The Framework is divided into two columns: integrating equity priorities into how Farmers for Climate Solutions functions as an organization (Institutional); and how they can be applied to its work (Practice).

Institutional	Practice
Develop strong rationale for proactive measures to support equity-deserving farmers	Integrate rationale for proactive measures, as listed in this table, into communications
Conduct an audit of existing internal policies, programs, communications / language; integrate equity audit into annual work schedule	Conduct an audit of policy recommendations
Establish & implement HR equity policy; hire people with lived experience	Integrate equity quota when hiring consultants / organizations to advance FCS work
Develop structures and practices to integrate equity into communications content, language, platforms, and guiding documents	Ensure that outward facing communications integrate equity-sensitive language, media, and visuals
Maintain and update as necessary the position statement on equity and operationalize by embedding it in strategic plans, mission, vision, values etc	Partner with organizations that represent equity-deserving farmers
Secure dedicated funding to support ongoing internal equity programs	Advocate for disaggregated data to enable analysis and development of targeted and tailored programs
Build internal expertise, including people with lived experience; provide consistent learning opportunities (cultural competence, implicit bias, privilege hoarding, anti-oppression training, etc)	Ensure that consultation exercises are designed, communicated and delivered to properly engage equity-deserving farmers and relevant groups.
Establish an Equity Advisory Group that includes representation from equity-deserving groups	Model leadership held by members of equity-deserving groups

Integrate action on relevant TRC recommendations into work plans	Publicly reject the Doctrine of Discovery and <i>terra nullius</i>
Develop meaningful land acknowledgement	Consistently include land acknowledgements in communications
Establish equity monitoring evaluation and adjustment protocols	Monitor and assess successful equity inclusion in policy formulation and program development

Equity Considerations applied to Policy Recommendations

Food systems scholar Patricia Allen noted an important distinction between material and process equity that is relevant to the implementation of policies and programs that seek to shift agriculture to more climate-friendly practices AND serve diversity within the sector: “material equity (that is, the distribution of resources) and process equity (that is, inclusion and democratic participation).”²⁴

There are various means available to the government to encourage equity measures aligned with the Multiculturalism Act and Canada’s commitment to Reconciliation, among others. Nevertheless, since farmers are generally self-employed entrepreneurs, there are fewer tools available than there are for other business sectors. The delivery of programs to the agriculture sector can provide important leverage to advance equity goals, provided they are designed and delivered well, integrating considerations of both material and process equity.

The recommendations below draw on the findings of our Equity research, focus groups and survey. Some are material while others relate to process. General recommendations are followed by those that speak to the specific categories identified by participants in the Equity Project.

General

1. Establish Senior Equity Advisors in both Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and Environment & Climate Change Canada
2. Institute equity-related data gathering that enables the creation of baseline setting, trend assessments, and ongoing improvements
3. Recognize structural barriers for equity-deserving farmers while also acknowledging that they bring assets, knowledge and skills necessary for agricultural success (assets-based, not just challenges)
4. Develop rationale and communications that demonstrate value and importance of proactive programs for equity-deserving farmers

²⁴ Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society 2010, 3, page 1. doi:10.1093/cjres/rsq015

5. Set clear and actionable targets for percentage of equity-deserving farmers served in program delivery (by number of farmers and / or dollar value)
6. Protect privacy of equity-deserving farmers who receive support
7. Establish programs explicitly for equity-deserving farmers, developing eligibility criteria for the programs that is derived from consultation with affected groups and individuals
8. Ensure that all initiatives targeting new farmers include programs for equity-deserving individuals.
9. Analyse and revise structures and delivery of programs offered by 4H clubs which tend to have a very low participation rate of equity-deserving groups.
10. Provide access to relevant professionals in program delivery who have undergone cultural sensitivity training, or who belong to equity-deserving groups
11. Assess range of languages necessary for accessible delivery; provide budget for translation
12. Establish proactive programs to connect new to experienced farmers who belong to equity-deserving groups
13. Do not rely on internet access as the sole means of delivery of programs and information
14. Consider what technologies can be integrated into program development to support better access for differently abled people.

Information

15. Deliver information in a barrier-free, respectful manner, considering language, age, lack of technology and internet access / expertise, the use of visuals;
16. Work with and through trusted and respectful individuals who provide information on program offerings that are accessible through appropriate channels, language, and scheduling will best serve equity-deserving farmers.
17. Visuals used in all communications to include representation from equity-deserving farmers (“You can’t be what you can’t see.”)
18. Provide supports that foster leadership skills among equity-deserving farmers in order to better equip them to participate effectively on relevant boards and other decision-making bodies
19. Enable access to mentors who have expertise in speciality (“ethnic”) crops; ideally these mentors also function as an avenue into social networks
20. Support on-farm information development and exchange (field trials, farmer field days, mentoring)

Financing

21. Perform an audit of existing grants / funding programs to review for plain language and opportunities to improve accessibility
22. Ensure that programs that provide financial support for infrastructure or management changes provide the funds up front, rather than reimbursement

23. Establish proactive cost-share programs for equity-deserving farmers, including loans and grants.
24. Enhance access to proactive credit for equity-deserving farmers (zero interest, forgivable portion), taking into consideration range of scales, owned vs leased land, sector needs
25. Ensure that financing programs allow for the purchase of movable equipment and infrastructure for those without land security
26. Develop insurance criteria and programs (both those delivered through the federal BRM program and through private insurers) that provide incentives for climate-friendly practices and crops
27. Ensure that speciality crops do not have disproportionately high insurance rates or criteria to quality (for example hemp, which currently has a very high insurance fee)

Land

All programs, including those seeking to enhance opportunities for equity-deserving farmers, must recognize the history and ongoing dispossession of Indigenous people from their territories on Turtle Island and the legacy of the systemic exclusion of African Canadians from land ownership. See pages 7-9 above for more information.

28. To support improved land access, explore options for enabling mortgages on land without structures (buildings), which can make the cost more accessible,
29. Ensure that programs delivered work for those on leased land who do not have secure tenure
30. Develop programs that remove barriers to and promote land ownership for equity-deserving farmers
31. Explore and adapt / adopt existing models of government incentives for larger farms to lease land, including lease to-own or gift options for smaller land parcels to new and equity-deserving farmers
32. Recognize and value set-asides (riparian areas, trees, bush)
33. Develop and expand land-sharing models that could include an equity stake for new farmers and integrate into programs

Participants in the Equity Project were also asked about the [policy proposals](#) put forward by FCS for Budget 2021 and if they could see the programs working for them. All programs need to set and reach targets for equity-deserving farmers as full participants in the implementation. The recommendations below apply to the respective program area.

Nitrogen management

- A. Create parameters for the program that do not rely solely on income history, in order to support access by first year farmers and those that farm diverse cropping systems or are small scale farmers
- B. Ensure nitrogen management training is tailored to address the needs of equity-deserving farmers, taking into consideration language, scale of operation, cropping systems, etc.

- C. Build understanding and create descriptions of what best nitrogen management practices look like on small-scale & diverse farms where most equity-deserving farmers are found or start

Cover cropping

- D. Allow cover crops grazed by working horses on the farm to qualify for the program
- E. Provide compensation to cover cost of seeds (not just an acreage payment, which does not work for small scale farming)
- F. Ensure that programs include unconventional varieties that work for market gardeners, as vegetative mulches etc.
- G. Integrate rotational grazing program, where appropriate, into cover cropping, encouraging collaboration between farms (cattle farms and grain farms, for example)

Rotational grazing practices

- H. Deliver programs that are accessible to all ruminants, including smaller species (goats, sheep), since they have lower barriers to entry for farmers
- I. Promote best practices related to food safety on the integration of small animals into cropping and tree fruit systems

On Farm Energy Use

- J. Consideration of location, including remoteness from larger centres, has to be included in program development and delivery, particularly related to the transition towards renewable energy
- K. Retrofit programs need to address the challenges of accessing parts and the necessary expertise in remote areas
- L. Electrification programs need to include commitments by large electricity producers (public or private) to compensate farmers fairly and consistently for farm-generated electricity sold into the grid

Appendix A: Terminology

Equity, diversity and inclusion are important ideas. For the purposes of this work, we understand the terms to mean:

Equity describes a degree of fairness in terms of access to the industry and possibility to succeed within the industry.

Inclusion describes the degree to which equity-deserving farmers have an opportunity to enter and succeed in the sector.

Diversity is a measure of success or failure in inclusion.

Equity-deserving farmers represents young farmers, women farmers, farmers with disabilities, Black farmers, Indigenous farmers and food providers, farmers of colour, 2SLGBTQ+ farmers, new Canadian farmers and small-scale farmers.

2SLGBTQ+ is an acronym representing Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, and gender diverse people.

BIPOC is an acronym representing Black, Indigenous and people of colour.

Indigenous in this context represents First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples, as well as Indigenous Peoples from other lands.

Indigenous farmers and food providers acknowledges Indigenous Peoples as stewards of the land who do not necessarily farm.

Young farmers represent youth between 14-35 years of age (according to the [National Farmers Union definition of a young farmer/youth farmer](#))

New Canadian farmers represent people who are new to Canada and who are farming.

Barriers to enter and succeed can represent systemic, economic, historic, social, and cultural barriers.

Intersectionality describes how race, class, gender, and other individual characteristics “intersect” with one another, to inform a person’s lived experiences, as well as their experiences of discrimination.

Vulnerabilization argues that people are not inherently ‘vulnerable’, but rather ‘vulnerabilized’.

Appendix B: Equity Project Team and Participants

The creation of this Equity Framework was led by six members, including an Advisory Committee, which was established through FCS' membership, and brought together four members. Advisory Committee members each committed to participating in four meetings over the course of the project and to providing guidance on our process and the content of the Framework. Their insights and guidance were invaluable and helped to ensure that the process was as inclusive, effective, and safe as possible. As co-leaders of the Equity Project, Arzeena Hamir brought her lived experience as a farmer and woman of colour, in addition to her prior contribution to FCS' work to facilitate each of the Focus Group Sessions. Abra Brynne brought her perspective as a queer woman, as well as her expertise in food policy and previous work with FCS to lead the writing of this Framework.

Focus Group participants were invited through FCS' membership and different agricultural groups across the country. The invitations explicitly stated that we wanted to connect with and hear the voices of Black farmers, Indigenous farmers and food providers, farmers of colour, 2SLGBTQ+ farmers, farmers with disabilities, women, small scale farmers, and new Canadian farmers. Five focus group sessions were held in March and April 2021, and gathered Market Gardeners, Livestock Farmers, Fruit Farmers and Grain & Oilseed Farmers for two hours each, and also included a \$50 honorarium for each participant. Focus Group participants joined from across the country, including from Ontario, Manitoba, BC, Quebec, and Alberta. Focus Groups also included trauma-informed counsellor services freely available to any participant who was harmed as a result of the conversations during the sessions. In addition to Focus Groups, a survey was also broadly circulated throughout FCS' networks and received over 50 detailed responses, providing additional insights into the barriers, strengths and needs of equity deserving farmers. Please see [Equity Project](#) webpage for more information.

Members of the Equity Project Team

ABRA BRYNNE: Food Policy Expert, Traditional Territory of the Sinixt, Syilx, and Ktunaxa peoples, BC

ANGEL BEYDE: Anti-Racism & Equity Consultant at EFAO and Market gardener, Treaty 13 Territory, ON

ARZEENA HAMIR: Vegetable farmer, Amara Farm, K'omoks Territory , BC

JUDY WASACASE: Former Land and Resource Manager, Kahkewistahaw First Nation, Treaty 4 Territory, SK

STUART CHUTTER: Cattle and forage crop farmer, Treaty 4 Territory, SK

TIFFANY TRAVERSE: Indigenous Land & Seed Steward, member of SeedChange Board of Directors and farmer, guest in Treaty 8 Territory, BC

Appendix C: Key Resources

There is a vast body of literature, commentary and analysis generated by Indigenous, Black, other People of Colour, as well as the 2SLGBTQ+ community and to whom we owe a great debt for helping to foster a deeper understanding of the harmful impacts of systemic racism, gender binary and heteronormativity.

In order to develop this framework, we had to look outside the agricultural sector for models, as we were unable to locate any equity frameworks specific to agriculture. Of those we were able to identify in North America, most were not authored by equity-deserving individuals. The list below includes models and analysis relevant to this framework.

An Annotated Bibliography on Structural Racism Present in the U.S. Food System, Eighth Edition, January 2021. MSU Center for Regional Food Systems. (No such collection exists in Canada but given how integrated the North American food system is, much of what is included in the document will also apply in Canada).

[https://www.canr.msu.edu/resources/structural_racism_in_us_food_system]

Racial Equity Toolkit: Implementing Greenlining's Racial Equity Framework, by Adrian Sanchez and Carla Saporta, The Greenlining Institute (no date).

[<https://greenlining.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/GLI-REF-Toolkit.pdf>]

Accommodating Cultural Diversity and Achieving Equity: An Introduction to the Psychological Dimensions of Multiculturalism, John W. Berry and David L. Sam, 2013.

[<https://doi.org/10.1027/1016-9040/a000167> - note that this paper is behind a paywall for academic partners, please contact us if you would like access to it]

A Strategic Racial Equity Framework, Liliana M. Garces and Cynthia Gordon da Cruz, 2017

[<https://doi.org/10.1080/0161956X.2017.1325592> - note that this paper is behind a paywall for academic partners, please contact us if you would like access to it]

Healthy Equity Toolkit: A Resource Inventory for Healthcare Organizations, Access Alliance Multicultural Health and Community Services, 2018.

[https://www.allianceon.org/sites/default/files/documents/Health%20Equity%20Toolkit_Final.pdf]

'Triple wins' or 'triple faults'? Analysing the equity implications of policy discourses on climate-smart agriculture (CSA). Linus Karlsson et al, The Journal of Peasant Studies, 45:1, 150-174. [<https://doi.org/10.1080/03066150.2017.1351433> - note that this paper is behind a paywall for academic partners, please contact us if you would like access to it]

Realizing justice in local food systems, Patricia Allen, Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society, 2010.

[https://www.ssc.wisc.edu/~wright/Sociology%20929-assignments-2010_files/realizingjustice.pdf]

'They took our beads, it was fair trade, get over it': Settler colonial logics, racial hierarchies and material dominance in Canadian agriculture, Sarah Rotz, Geoforum, 2017

[<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2017.04.010>]

The Guide To Advance Racial Justice and Health Equity, Boston Public Health Commission, 2018.

[<https://bphc.org/whatwedo/racialjusticeandtheequity/Documents/BPHC%20The%20Guide%20To%20Advance%20Racial%20Justice%20and%20Health%20Equity.pdf>]

Cultural Competence and Cultural Safety in Nursing Education: A Framework for First Nations, Inuit and Métis Nursing. Aboriginal Nurses Association of Canada, 2009.

[https://cna-aiic.ca/~media/cna/page-content/pdf-en/first_nations_framework_e.pdf]

Implementing 2SLGBTQ+ Inclusion: A Tipsheet for Change Champions in the Youth-Serving Sector. Wisdom2Action, 2020.

[<https://www.wisdom2action.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Raising-the-Bar-Tip-Sheet.pdf>]